



KANSAS' CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY LAW MUST HELP PARENTS KEEP THEIR CHILDREN SAFE

These specific changes to the child passenger safety law will immediately save the lives of Kansas children:

- **Increase the age for appropriate child restraint use to include children ages 4 to 8 or 4'9" or 80 lbs.**
- **Increase the fine from \$20 to \$60, which brings it in line with other traffic fines in the state. However, the entire fine is waived if a driver provides proof of child seat acquisition.**
- **Include a phase-in period for these new requirements to allow for appropriate public education.**

We know the ***Problem:***



- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for Kansas children ages 1 through 17 (Child Death Review Board).
- Observational surveys conducted in 2004 found that 81% of Kansas children ages 0-4 were in child seats, but only 49% of children ages 5-9 were protected by a booster seat or seat belt. This compares to a 68% usage rate for adults.
- One in 20 passenger vehicles is involved in a crash each year.
- Non-use of appropriate restraints costs us all – through higher automobile insurance premiums and increased Medicaid costs.

We know ***Seat Belts and Child Restraints Work:***



- A recent national study (2003) found that placing a 4-7 year old in a booster seat rather than an adult seat belt reduces the risk of death or serious injury by 59%.
- After a child outgrows their child safety seat (about age 4 and 40 lbs), a belt-positioning booster seat should be used to raise the child up so that the seat belt, which is designed for an adult body, fits the child's body. Since children in booster seats use the adult seat belt, no installation of the seat is required.
- Booster seats that meet federal safety standards are readily available for \$12 - \$30. Seats are also available in Kansas through loaner and distribution programs, Child Safety Seat Check Up Events and Fitting Stations, and Safe Kids Kansas. Several models of child safety seats will convert to a high-back booster seat.

We know *Laws Work*:

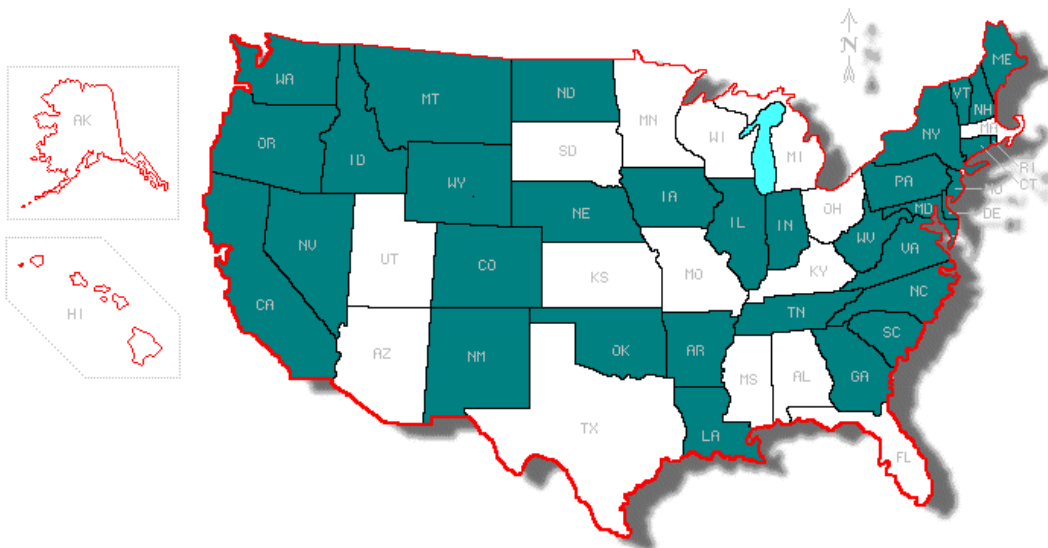


- Kansas requires children age 0-4 to use a child safety seat. Since the early 1980's there has been an impressive 53% decrease in death rates from motor vehicle crashes among the 0-4 age group in our state.
- Kansas does not require booster seats for children over the age of 4; there has only been a 4% reduction in death rates in that age category.
- In Indiana, 4 months after their booster seat law went into effect, booster seat use for children ages 4 to 8 went from 9% to 72%.
- It's not just common sense – the state's child seat law is the most frequently used reference for safe child transportation used by Kansas parents.
- Thirty-Four states (including D.C.) now have booster seat laws

Make it work:

- Contact your state legislator and encourage their support of legislation that strengthens the child passenger safety law in our state. Just like immunization laws, strong child passenger safety laws save children's lives.
- Sign up for Legislative updates by sending your e-mail request to: jstegelm@kdhe.state.ks.us.

"The state law indicated that child safety seats only needed to be used until age 4. I figured that meant a seat belt was safe for my 4-year-old"Parent



***States in green have booster seat law.**

PG-8 PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED

Place Children Under 8 Years Old in a Child Safety Seat or Booster Seat